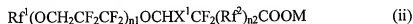## AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (canceled).

2. (currently amended): A fluoroalkylcarboxylic acid derivative which is represented by the general formula (ii):

$$Rf^1(OCH_2CF_2CF_2)_{n1}OCHX^1CF_2(Rf^2)_{n2}COOM \qquad (ii)$$

wherein Rf^1 represents a straight or branched fluoroalkyl group containing 1 to 20 carbon atoms, said fluoroalkyl group may optionally contain 1 to 5 oxygen atoms in the principal chain thereof, Rf^2 represents a straight or branched fluoroalkylene group containing 1 to 25 carbon atoms, said fluoroalkylene group may optionally contain 1 to 5 oxygen atoms in the principal chain thereof, $n1$ ~~represents an integer of 0 to 3~~ is 0 (zero), $n2$ represents an integer of 0 or 1, X^1 represents hydrogen atom or fluorine atom, and M represents NH_4 or a monovalent metal element.

3. (previously presented): The fluoroalkylcarboxylic acid derivative according to Claim 2, wherein Rf^1 is a straight or branched fluoroalkyl group containing 1 to 7 carbon atoms, said fluoroalkyl group may optionally contain 1 to 3 oxygen atoms in the principal chain thereof.

4. (original): The fluoroalkylcarboxylic acid derivative according to Claim 3, wherein Rf^1 is CF_3-, CF_3CF_2-, $CF_3CF_2CF_2$-, $(CF_3)_2CF$-, $CF_3CF_2CF_2CF_2$-, $CF_3CF_2CF_2OCF(CF_3)CF_2$-, $HCF_2CF_2CF_2$- or $CF_3OCF(CF_3)CF_2$-.

5. (canceled).

6.   (previously presented): The fluoroalkylcarboxylic acid derivative according to

Claim 2, wherein Rf^2 is $-CF_2OCF_2-$, $-CF_2(OCF(CF_3)CF_2)_{n3}OCF(CF_3)-$ (in which n3 represents

an integer of 0 to 4) or $-CF_2(OCF(CF_3)CF_2)_{n4}(CF_2CF_2)_{n5}-$ (in which n4 represents an integer of 0

to 5 and n5 represents an integer of 0 to 5 provided that n4 and n5 satisfy the relation 3 x n4 + 2

x n5 ≤ 20).

7.   (previously presented): The fluoroalkylcarboxylic acid derivative according to

Claim 2, wherein n2 is 0 (zero).

8.   (previously presented): A surfactant which comprises the fluoroalkylcarboxylic

acid derivative according to Claim 2.

9.   (withdrawn): A method of producing a fluoropolymer,

wherein the fluoroalkylcarboxylic acid derivative according to Claim 1 is used as a surfactant in

carrying out a polymerization in an aqueous medium.

10.   (withdrawn): The method of producing the fluoropolymer according to Claim 9,

wherein the fluoroalkylcarboxylic acid derivative is used in an amount of 0.0001 to 20%

by mass relative to the aqueous medium.

11.   (withdrawn): A fluoropolymer aqueous dispersion, wherein a particle comprising

a fluoropolymer is dispersed in an aqueous medium in the presence of the fluoroalkylcarboxylic

acid derivative according to Claim 1.

12.   (withdrawn): A fluoropolymer powder which is obtained by coagulating the

fluoropolymer aqueous dispersion according to Claim 11.

13.   (withdrawn): A fluoropolymer aggregate obtained by coagulating the

fluoropolymer aqueous dispersion according to Claim 11, which is a polytetrafluoroethylene

powder, a powder or a pellet each comprising a melt-processible resin, or a coagulation

comprising an elastomeric polymer.

14.   (withdrawn): A film/membrane which is obtained by coating, impregnation or

cast film formation using the fluoropolymer aqueous dispersion according to Claim 11.

15.   (withdrawn): A molded article which is obtained by molding using the

fluoropolymer powder according to Claim 12.

16.   (withdrawn): A method of producing a fluoroalkylcarboxylic acid derivative,

which comprises producing the fluoroalkylcarboxylic acid derivative according to Claim

1 by converting a fluorocarboxylic acid fluoride represented by the general formula (3):

$$Rf^1(OCH_2CF_2CF_2)_{n1}OCX^1X^2CF_2(Rf^2)_{n2}COF \qquad (3)$$
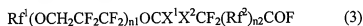
wherein Rf^1, Rf^2, n1, n2, X^1 and X^2 are as defined hereinabove, to a fluorocarboxylic acid salt.

17.   (withdrawn): The method of producing the fluoroalkylcarboxylic acid derivative

according to Claim 16, wherein the conversion of the fluorocarboxylic acid fluoride represented

by the general formula (3) to the fluorocarboxylic acid salt is carried out by

(A)   a method comprising converting the terminal –COF group in said general formula

(3) to –COOH by hydrolysis using an acid and converting the -COOH to –COOM by

neutralization with an alkali,

(B)   a method comprising esterifying the terminal –COF group in said general formula

(3) and, after separation of the ester, converting the ester moiety to –COOM by saponification, or

(C)   a method comprising esterifying the terminal –COF group in said general formula

(3) and, after separation of the ester, converting the ester moiety to –COOM by saponification,

then converting the latter to –COOH using an acid and then converting this to –COOM by

neutralization with an alkali.

18.   (withdrawn): The method of producing the fluoroalkylcarboxylic acid derivative

according to Claim 16, wherein the fluorocarboxylic acid fluoride represented by the general

formula (3) is represented by said general formula (3) in which n2 is 1, and

said fluorocarboxylic acid fluoride represented by the general formula (3) is produced by

reacting an intermediate fluorocarboxylic acid fluoride represented by the general formula (2):

$$Rf^1(OCH_2CF_2CF_2)_{n1}OCX^1X^2CF_2COF \qquad (2)$$
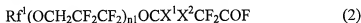
wherein Rf^1, n1, X^1 and X^2 are as defined above, with tetrafluoroethylene and iodine in an

aprotic polar solvent to thereby convert the terminal $-COF$ in said general formula (2) to -

$CF_2OCF_2CF_2I$, followed by further conversion of the latter to $-CF_2OCF_2COF$ by reaction with

oleum, or

said fluorocarboxylic acid fluoride represented by the general formula (3) is produced by

converting the terminal $-COF$ in said general formula (2) to $-CF_2(OCF(CF_3)CF_2)_pOCF(CF_3)COF$

[p being an integer of 0 to 5] by addition of hexafluoropropylene oxide, converting the terminal $-$

$CF(CF_3)COF$ to $-CF(CF_3)I$ via $-CF(CF_3)COI$ and converting $-CF(CF_3)I$ to $-CF(CF_3)(CF_2CF_2)_qI$

(q being an integer of 1 to 5), followed by further conversion to $-CF(CF_3)(CF_2CF_2)_{q-1}CF_2COF$.

19.   (withdrawn): The method of producing the fluoroalkylcarboxylic acid derivative

according to Claim 16, wherein the intermediate fluorocarboxylic acid fluoride represented by

the general formula (2) is a second intermediate represented by the general formula (2a):
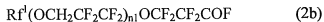
$$Rf^1(OCH_2CF_2CF_2)_{n1}OCHFCF_2COF \qquad (2a)$$

wherein Rf^1 and n1 are as defined above, as obtained by monofluorinating a first intermediate

represented by the general formula (1):

$$Rf^1(OCH_2CF_2CF_2)_{n1}OCH_2CF_2COF \qquad (1)$$

wherein Rf^1 and n1 are as defined above, or

a third intermediate represented by the general formula (2b):

$Rf^l(OCH_2CF_2CF_2)_{n1}OCF_2CF_2COF$ (2b)

wherein Rf^l and n1 are as defined above, as obtained by difluorinating said first intermediate.

20.   (withdrawn): The method of producing the fluoroalkylcarboxylic acid derivative according to Claim 16, wherein Rf^l represents a straight or branched fluoroalkyl group containing 5 to 7 carbon atoms, said fluoroalkyl group may contain 1 to 5 oxygen atoms in the principal chain thereof.